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NBO
Westervelt, L.

THE PUPPET-SHOW.

COKES—"Do you call these players?"

LEATHERHEAD—"They are actors, sir"

—BEN JONSON.

F

THE
PUPPET-SHOW

A SKETCH

BY
LEONIDAS WESTERVELT

SECOND EDITION

THE
Abbey Press

PUBLISHERS

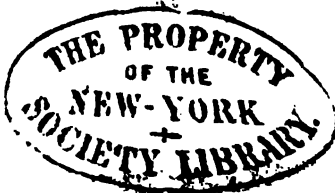
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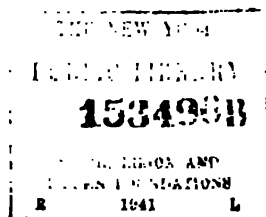
FIFTH AVENUE

NEW YORK

1900

LC





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TO MY MOTHER

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THE PUPPET-SHOW.

I.

WINTHROP'S DEN.

BEVERLY WINTHROP lighted a cigarette, and picking up his novel lazily settled back on the couch. He had about decided to take a "night off," as he expressed it: not for want of something better to do; he remembered the first of the Friday cotillions met at Del's, and then there was Mrs. Brander Well's musical evening. What would Mrs.

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Brander Wells think of him, if, after accepting her invitation, he failed to come! "Nine!" struck the clock. Beverly yawned, and threw down his novel.

"I wonder why people write such bosh?" he mused; "there ought to be a law to stop it."

Just then Jones entered—Jones was Beverly's valet.

"Beg pardon, sir," this worthy said, pausing on the threshold. "It's nine o'clock, sir."

Beverly thought a minute: Mrs. Brander Wells was certainly attractive, but then—"What's it 'doing' out?" he finally inquired.

Winthrop's Den.

"Snowing, sir," the valet replied. "A most disagreeable night, sir."

That settled it; he wouldn't budge for all the balls and musicals in New York. As for Mrs. Brander Wells, he could send her a note of apology and some roses in the morning—that would undoubtedly make it all right.

"Jones," he said, lying back on the couch, "I'm not going out to-night; you may bring me the evening papers."

Just then the door-bell rang.

"If that's Mr. Sethway," Beverly added, as the man was about to exit, "tell him to come right up. I'm not at home to any one else."

The valet soon returned with a card.

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“It’s a strange gentleman, sir. Said he must see you. I told him I didn’t know whether or not you were at home.”

Beverly glanced at the card, and then gave a low whistle of surprise.

“Lee! Jim Lee returned! Well, I’ll be ——. Don’t stand there like a statue, Jones! Show the gentleman up, and hurry a little, if that’s possible.”

At this moment the door quickly opened, and Jim Lee entered. He was covered with snow from head to foot, and looked like a huge snow-man.

“Beverly, old fellow,” he cried in a hearty voice as he grasped his friend’s hand, “I’m delighted to see you! I knew your voice from below and

Winthrop's Den.

couldn't wait to be shown up. Oh, hang it all! I've brought a regular snow-storm into your room."

"Never mind that, Jim," Beverly replied warmly; "consider this den as much yours as mine. Jones, take Mr. Lee's hat and coat; he is going to spend the night with me."

"But, my dear Winthrop, really I——"

"Not a word, Jim! Do you think I'm going to let you run in and right out again, when I haven't seen you for three years! Sit down there by the fire, and tell me what you mean by turning up in New York without letting me know anything about it; here, take a cigarette, and look as if you felt at home."

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Lee settled back in the huge armchair his friend pointed to, and lighted a cigarette before replying.

“You see, Beverly,” he at length said, “about three weeks ago I received a long letter from the governor. He’s been awfully good to me, as you know: paid for my course at the *École des Beaux Arts* in Paris, besides allowing me a generous sum for private expenses. Well, to cut matters short, he wrote that he was lonely and not at all well, and begged me to come home for a while at least. I had practically finished my art studies, and to tell the truth his letter made me feel a bit homesick; so,

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packing up my traps, I cabled dad, left Paris, and—well, here I am.”

“Jim, you always were a queer fellow,” Beverly said in an injured tone; “why on earth didn’t you cable *me*.”

“Thought I’d take you by surprise, Bev. Tell me, how is dear old New York, and every one?”

“Just the same,” Beverly replied shortly. “That’s the trouble; it always is just the same.”

“And you, I presume, are still the ‘social butterfly’ of old?”

Winthrop smiled. “I’ve been meditating of late on retiring in my cocoon for good. Society is getting stupider every year.”

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Jim gave a hearty laugh. "Beverly Winthrop give up social life!" he exclaimed. "Never, never! Who would be left to lead cotillions, look out for the season's *débutantes* and superintend the annual charity ball? Why——"

"Nonsense, Jim," interrupted Beverly, a little annoyed by his chum's banter. "The flock would soon learn to follow another shepherd. Seriously speaking, I've felt rather blue lately, and at one time thought of joining you in Paris, for a change."

"I wish you had," said Lee earnestly, "but still I'm afraid you'd have found my daily routine far more

Winthrop's Den.

monotonous than the life you lead here. I have been working, Beverly—working very hard.”

Winthrop leaned back in his chair and smiled faintly. The idea of working—in Paris of all places!—seemed very absurd to him; yet he knew the young artist meant just what he said. From Winthrop's standpoint, Lee had always been an odd sort of a chap.

“Well, now you are back in New York, what are you going to do,” Beverly at length inquired; “loaf for a while?”

“Not a bit of it,” replied Lee. “My first move will be to fit up a studio

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somewhere; then I am going to try and secure some orders for portraits, and perhaps in my spare time do a little magazine work. I have brought over a number of paintings and sketches, and I thought that after a time I might place them on exhibition. It is about this that I want to consult you, Beverly. How do you think a sort of a 'picture tea,' with flowers, music, and all that sort of thing would take?"

"Nothing easier," replied Beverly after a moment's thought. "Engage some rooms in the Astoria for your pictures, but dispense with the music and so forth. It's apt to bore people,

Winthrop's Den.

now-a-days. Let—me—see. We must have some attraction, some magnet to draw the right people——”

“How about my pictures?” broke in the artist with an injured air; “you are forgetting them entirely.”

“My dear Jim, after you get the people there, they will be perfectly willing to look at your pictures; the point is, how to get them there.”

“I might prevail upon some attractive women to receive my guests, pour tea and preside over the punch bowl. That ought to bring the men, if we drop a hint at the clubs beforehand.”

Beverly shook his head. “It’s the

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ladies' patronage you wish to secure," he said; "some men will follow as a matter of course."

"What do you suggest then?"

"There is one thing a woman will go anywhere to satisfy." Beverly replied after a moment's pause.

"And that is?"

"Curiosity."

"I don't quite catch your meaning."

Beverly suddenly straightened up in his chair. "I have it!" he exclaimed joyfully.

"Have what?" Jim asked with a puzzled expression.

"The attraction, the magnet," his chum replied impatiently, "or what-

Winthrop's Den.

ever you choose to call it. All you have to do is to pick out society's latest pet, paint her portrait for next to nothing, and persuade her to let you place it in your exhibit. Her friends will naturally hear all about it, and—well, there you are.”

“You really think that plan would succeed?”

“Certainly, if you paint the right girl.”

“And who is the right girl? I'm sure you have her in mind.”

“Yes,” Beverly replied quickly, “Helen Trever.”

“Helen Trever,” repeated the artist. “Rather a pretty name. Who is she?”

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"My dear fellow, you mean to say—oh, excuse me. I forgot for the moment that you've hardly had time to read the papers. Miss Trever is at present the most talked about young lady in New York. Society fairly bows down to her."

"Dear me," remarked Jim, becoming quite interested; "is she as handsome as all that?"

"Handsome? Yes, very—but that's not her chief attraction. It's her personality; such a delicious combination of sobriety and mischief—her moods change as often as the hours, and one can never tell what she is going to do next. You see everything's new

Winthrop's Den.

to the girl; she's never been anywhere, or seen anything before; and her perfectly natural and unaffected manner charms every one."

"She's not a New Yorker then?"

"Oh, no; her home is somewhere in the South. Society owes me a vote of thanks for discovering her—you see I proved quite a Columbus."

"What are you talking about?" interrupted the artist laughingly. "One would think Miss Trever was some curious stone or animal."

"I was spending a few weeks at Narragansett Pier last summer," con-

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tinued Beverly, paying no attention to Lee's interruption, "and there, quite by accident, I met Helen Trever. You know, old man, I am always attracted by a pretty face, and when I found that she also possessed brains, a rare combination now-a-days, I said to myself: 'Here is a girl who could bring society to her feet, if she had a fair chance.' After considerable argument and a little diplomacy, I induced Miss Elizabeth Brand—Helen's aunt and chaperon—to bring her niece to New York; launched my protegee, and——"

"She floated?" broke in the artist with a laugh.

Winthrop's Den.

"Floated! I should think so. She was a success, a decided success from the start."

"So this is the girl whose portrait I am to paint," Jim said complacently.

"Yes," Beverly replied, "if you are fortunate enough to get the opportunity, and succeed in striking a sufficiently flattering likeness, your reputation—as far as society is concerned—will be permanently established. Orders are sure to come in faster than you can fill them."

"*If* I get the opportunity? I don't quite catch your meaning."

"My dear fellow, you haven't obtained Miss Trever's consent yet."

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Lee fidgeted in his chair. "I relied on you to obtain that for me," he said, slightly embarrassed.

Winthrop puffed his cigarette for several seconds without speaking. At length he looked up: "I'll do the best I can for you, Jim."

"But surely she wouldn't refuse you this favor, for you've done so much for her."

"No, not if she happened to feel like granting it."

"Pshaw! the girl must be profoundly ungrateful."

"Don't call her ungrateful, Jim; say rather that she hasn't time to

Winthrop's Den.

bother. It means the same thing, but sounds very much better."

Lee sipped his whisky-and-soda in silence. At length Beverly said: "You remember George Sethway, don't you?"

"The plucky little chap who played half-back on the Yale team in '94? Of course I do."

"Well," exclaimed Beverly with a laugh, "he's Helen's latest victim."

"Victim?"

"Yes, poor chap. He was head over heels in love with her—some even went so far as to say they were engaged. However, she finally threw him over."

"Indeed," Jim exclaimed, "how very

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interesting. And have there been other—er—victims?”

“Plenty,” replied Beverly, consulting a small memorandum book. “Two this month, and perhaps others I haven’t heard of.”

“Quite a record. Has—er—has your turn come yet?”

Beverly looked at his chum for a moment, and then with a knowing smile slowly shook his head. “I’m not one of the puppets!” he said; “I’m only in the audience.”

“A good place to remain, I should judge,” remarked the artist stiffly.

“Do you expect to remain there?” questioned the other.

Winthrop's Den.

"What in the dickens are you talking about? Of course I do."

Beverly smiled faintly. "You haven't met her yet, Jim."

"What possible difference can that make?" responded Lee, a little nettled by Winthrop's air of assurance.

"Oh, no difference. I only mean that it's not always well to be too confident."

Lee rose and poked the fire vigorously. He had a lurking suspicion that his chum was having some fun at his expense. A furtive glance at Beverly, however, showed his expression to be gravity itself.

"When can you see Miss Trever?"

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he at length inquired, resuming his seat. "I should like to know definitely about the portrait as soon as possible."

"She's visiting at Tuxedo just now," Beverly replied. "So I'll have to wait till she returns—about two weeks, I presume. *You* can see her to-night though, if you want to."

"To-night?"

"Don't look so scared! I mean, you can see her photograph."

"Oh!" exclaimed the artist, visibly annoyed. "Why don't you speak plain English, so a fellow can understand you!"

He lounged back in his chair, idly

Winthrop's Den.

watching Winthrop turn the contents of a desk upside down in his search for the photograph.

"It's fairly good," Beverly remarked, "and will give you some idea what Miss Trever looks like—where in the—ah, here it is! Now, old man, tell me—what do you think of her?"

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II.

CONCERNING JIM LEE.

JAMES LEE, or "Jim" Lee—as he was more familiarly known — was just twenty-six. He came of a good old family, which for years had owned and occupied one of those picturesque though old fashioned estates so often met with along the Hudson.

Jim's mother died when he was a mere baby, and as his father was somewhat of a recluse—never happy unless poring over books, or busy

Concerning Jim Lee.

at his desk—the boy at an early age was thrown almost entirely on his own resources. It was then that his natural ability for drawing first showed itself. He would amuse himself by the hour “making pictures” on little scraps of paper picked up about the house, and as he grew older the talent not only clung to him, but finally developed into such a passion that everything else went unheeded. For days at a time, Jim—with sketch book under his arm—explored the surrounding country in search of the picturesque, quaint or beautiful.

At last Lee senior awoke to the fact that his son’s education was being

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totally neglected. Making a supreme effort, he left his books long enough to pack Jim off to boarding school, and then returned to them with a sigh of relief and a feeling that he had done all that duty demanded.

Soon after leaving school Jim went to Yale, and it was there that he formed his first real friendship.

Beverly Winthrop—four years Jim's senior—entered college the same year Jim did, and was in the same class. Unlike Lee, however, he had been reared in luxury. "Ask for what you want and it is yours," that is the lesson he had been taught from babyhood. Ambitions? He had none. Life

Concerning Jim Lee.

to him was simply a play ground, capable of affording a fixed amount of pleasure—nothing else. He went to college because it seemed the thing to do, just as it seemed proper to eat three meals a day, or to get up in the morning—providing one happened to feel like it. Yet, strange to say, between these two fellows of exactly opposite ideas and characteristics, a friendship grew which proved both deep and lasting. Perhaps it was because neither interfered too much with the other's ways and beliefs. A heated discussion would generally end by Lee saying: "Well, some day you'll find that I'm right." Or Beverly

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exclaiming: "You're a good fellow, Jim, but your ideas are so confoundedly old-fashioned." Then they would laugh and walk away together, better friends than ever.

Jim was the only man in college who held any influence over Beverly. Frequently he would talk his chum out of entering into some madcap-adventure, and on one occasion he saved Beverly from a scrape which would have undoubtedly ended in his expulsion. Winthrop, on the other hand, infused a certain amount of life and buoyancy into Lee's nature, which without it might have become a little too matter-of-fact and prosaic.

Concerning Jim Lee.

So they helped each other; almost always disagreeing, often arguing fiercely, but never quarreling.

On graduating from college, Winthrop plunged into social life, soon becoming a recognized leader, and very popular. Lee, however, only took a look at society, and then set out for Paris, determining to take up art as a profession.

For three years he studied and worked with but little success. At times he was almost ready to give up in despair, but a strain of obstinacy and perseverance which predominated in his character, caused him to "stick to it," and at last by pure hard work

The Puppet-Show.

he won success. One of his pictures—a “figure study” on which he had placed very little hope—was accepted by the *salon*, and, much to Jim’s astonishment, received favorable notice from the critics. After this piece of good fortune his pictures met with a ready sale, and long before he realized it Lee was making quite a name for himself.

Then came the letter from his father. Mr. Lee was sick and lonely, and wanted his son to come home. Jim had just completed arrangements for an extended sketching tour through Normandy and Brittany; this, however, he abandoned without hesitation

Concerning Jim Lee.

and, having settled his affairs successfully, he left Paris and was soon tossing on the Atlantic — homeward bound.

Mr. Lee's condition was far more serious than Jim had anticipated. Time and a purely sedentary life had completely shattered his naturally strong constitution, though he was still able to sit at his desk or listlessly turn the pages of a favorite volume.

Jim at once made arrangements to take up his life at home. He decided, however, to rent a studio in the city, and come in as frequently as might prove necessary. An artist friend provided him with a list of unoccupied

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studios, and a few days after the interview in Beverly's rooms he started out to look at them.

As he leisurely sauntered along Fifth Avenue, noting the familiar landmarks, Lee felt supremely happy.

"How nice it seems to be home again," he mused, "and how fortunate I am in knowing Beverly Winthrop. He's the right sort of a fellow, and will do everything in his power to help me along."

As for Helen Trever, he thought of her too, but only to say to himself:

"I suppose I'll have no end of trouble in suiting her—most women are *exigeante*."

In the Turkish Room of the Waldorf.

III.

IN THE TURKISH ROOM OF THE WALDORF.

“So our lost sheep has at last returned to the fold,” said Beverly Winthrop, laying aside his hat and coat.

“And right glad she is to get back again,” was Miss Trever’s laughing reply. “Why didn’t you come up for the golf match? You promised me you would.”

“I was a bit under the weather,” he answered, sitting down beside her on

The Puppet-Show.

the divan. "Been doing too much lately."

"Poor fellow!" Miss Trever exclaimed, clasping her hands in tragic gesture. "He does have to work so hard."

"Now your're poking fun at me."

"Three dinners to eat in one evening," she went on, "just think of it! And then a cotillion to lead afterward; why, I'm sure——"

"Oh, I say," interrupted Beverly good-naturedly, "don't be too hard on a fellow—I suppose you had a very good time at Tuxedo. You always do."

"Yes," she replied, rather indifferently, "I had a good enough time."

In the Turkish Room of the Waldorf.

“You don’t speak as enthusiastically as usual. Was the dance at the club-house slow?”

“Not a bit.”

“What was the matter, then? Come, confess!”

She looked down and made an impatient little gesture.

“Oh, I saw the usual crowd of men, danced the usual number of dances, and talked the usual amount of nonsense; it was all very delightful, but——”

“Well?” he queried.

“Mr. Winthrop, I’m heartily tired of it.”

Beverly appeared very much sur-

The Puppet-Show.

prised—this sentiment was certainly new to Helen Trever.

“What do you want?” he asked, looking at her curiously, “fresh fields to conquer?”

“I want something *real*,” Miss Trever replied earnestly. “Something that is honest and genuine. I’m desperately tired of this make believe life; we might just as well be puppets in a puppet-show.”

Beverly smiled. He felt both puzzled and amused.

“This won’t do, Miss Trever,” he remarked in mock sternness. “What will society say if you desert? At the very beginning of the season, too!

In the Turkish Room of the Waldorf.

Remember you are my *protégée*, and in a way I feel responsible."

Helen was all smiles in a moment.

"Don't look so sad, it isn't at all becoming," she exclaimed laughingly, and with something of the old fire in her eyes. "I'll endeavor not to injure your reputation by turning traitor to the cause. Do you really enjoy society, Mr. Winthrop?"

He nodded.

"What do you find in it?"

"It amuses me."

"And do you never tire of the amusement?"

"Occasionally; then I go away for a time—get back to Nature by rusti-

The Puppet-Show.

cating in some unfrequented corner of the globe; do nothing, see nothing, think of nothing, till at length—out of pure desperation—I rush back to the puppet-show, resume my old life, meet my old friends, and wonder how I could have left them. After all, Miss Trever, what were we put here for if not to enjoy ourselves? I find society a very amusing toy; why should I cast it aside because it is merely mechanical?”

“I don’t know but you’re right,” she said after a moment’s pause. “What is the use of bothering? And yet I often feel that one would be happier if one had some incentive

In the Turkish Room of the Waldorf.

for living besides mere pleasure—a great desire, or noble ambition, I mean.”

Beverly laughed. “You ought to meet my friend Lee,” he said; “that’s his argument exactly.”

“Lee,” she repeated. “Oh, yes, I think I’ve heard you speak of him before. He does something, doesn’t he?—writes, or paints?”

“Lee’s an artist,” Winthrop replied. “He has just returned from Europe, where he made quite a name for himself. It was all in the newspapers. Don’t you recollect at Narragansett last summer that I showed you——”

The Puppet-Show.

"Speaking of Narragansett," she interrupted with a gay laugh, "reminds me that I have something to show you."

"Indeed! what is it?"

"Do you remember that awful Nelsin girl?"

"The 'freak' with Titian hair and a chocolate poodle? No one could possibly help remembering her."

"Well," Miss Trever went on, "there's a picture in this month's *Vogue* headed 'At Trouville,' and one of the girls in it is the image of fair Miss Nelsin. Have you seen it?"

"No," he replied with a laugh; "I'll get a copy at once."

In the Turkish Room of the Waldorf.

"You needn't; I cut out the picture and saved it to show you," Helen



AT TROUVILLE.

COUNT NOODLES (showing American friend the "sights")—"Ze one in blue? Zat is Miss Fufu. She is ze 'beauty' of ze place! Come! I will introduce you."

CYNICAL AMERICAN—"Much obliged, Noodles, but don't trouble to. I can admire her just as well from here."

remarked, opening a little silver purse which hung from her chatelaine. "Oh, here it is!"

The Puppet-Show.

She unfolded the slip of paper and carefully smoothing it out, handed it to him.

"Isn't the likeness remarkable? The words are so appropriate, too."

Beverly looked at the picture a moment, and then handed it back with a smile. "It's Jim's work," he said.

"You mean your friend, Mr. Lee?" Miss Trever asked with an air of interest. "Did he draw this?"

"Yes."

"How do you know?"

"Don't you see his name in the corner? It caught my eye the first thing."

In the Turkish Room of the Waldorf.

"Oh, yes," she exclaimed, looking at the picture again. "Did he write the words too?"

"I presume so. It reads like Jim."

"What do you mean?"

Beverly smiled faintly. "Well, he has a few rather peculiar notions, that's all."

"What sort of notions?" she persisted.

"The fact is," Winthrop said, "Jim never cared for girls very much."

"Oh, I understand," Miss Trever remarked. "He is not susceptible."

"Susceptible! I should say not. Jim actually dislikes girls."

The Puppet-Show.

"Nonsense!"

"Yes, but true, nevertheless."

Miss Trever looked down for a minute, absent-mindedly picking to pieces the violets she wore at her corsage.

"I believe," she exclaimed at length, "that I should like Mr. Lee; he must be different from—from the ordinary man."

"I think you would find him different," Beverly replied dryly.

"How old is he?" she asked.

"Just twenty-six."

"Good-looking?"

"Some women might consider him so."

In the Turkish Room of the Waldorf.

"And you say that he has never—
er—never shown a liking for any one
particular girl?"

"Not to my knowledge."

"But suppose the one particular
girl showed a liking for him. What
would happen then?"

"I don't know," laughed Winthrop.
"I suppose he'd keep out of her
way."

"I don't believe it," she exclaimed
vehemently.

"No," Winthrop replied, "you naturally
wouldn't believe it—at least not
until you had known Jim a while."

Miss Trever glanced at him mis-
chievously.

The Puppet-Show.

“I know you are all wrong,” she said, “and I could prove it, if—if I had a favorable opportunity.”

“By making Jim fall in love with you?” he asked quite seriously.

She blushed slightly, but remained silent. Suddenly a bright idea flashed through Winthrop’s mind.

“Mr. Lee’s work is admirable,” he said, after an awkward pause, “but of course he isn’t very well known in New York as yet. Now I was just thinking, Miss Trever, that if you would consent to sit for a portrait, you’d surely be more than satisfied, and—er——”

She interrupted him with a gay

In the Turkish Room of the Waldorf.

burst of laughter. "And get the opportunity I mentioned? It would be lots of fun, but——"

"But what?"

"I might succeed, and then——"

"You wouldn't succeed," Beverly replied confidently—acting his part to perfection.

"I *could* succeed," she answered, "that is—I mean if I wanted to very much."

"With most men perhaps, but not with Jim Lee."

"What would you be willing to wager?" she asked, half in earnest.

"Candy against cigarettes, as many pounds as you like."

The Puppet-Show.

"I am sick of candy."

"Flowers, then."

"No, no; let's make it something unconventional."

He thought a minute.

"Did you ever find that bracelet, the one you lost at Sherry's last month?"

She shook her head.

"Well," said Winthrop quickly, "if you succeed, I will replace it."

Her eyes fairly danced with mischief. "How much time would you be willing to allow me?"

"I think it will take Jim at least six weeks to paint the portrait. By the time it is finished, you will admit that I am right."

In the Turkish Room of the Waldorf.

Miss Trever laughed merrily. "Oh, no; by that time I will have proved the contrary."

Beverly smiled as he rose to his feet to go.

"So you accept my challenge?" he asked, slowly buttoning his gloves.

She made no reply. Perhaps she had not heard him, her attention just then being attracted by some one at the other end of the room. Winthrop picked up his hat and overcoat, and then held out his hand to say good-by.

"Oh, must you really be going?" Miss Trever exclaimed, rising.

"I suppose you will be at the Schuyler's to-night?" he asked.

The Puppet-Show.

"I think so."

"I hope to see you there. Good-by."

He was halfway across the room when she called him back.

"Mr. Winthrop, is your friend Mr. Lee very busy at present?"

"I don't think so, Miss Trever," Beverly replied, somewhat surprised. "Why do you ask?"

Miss Trever colored prettily and nervously fingered the little silver *bijoux* on her chatelaine.

"I was just wondering," she said, "when he could give me the first sitting for that portrait. Will you ask him, Mr. Winthrop?"

In the Turkish Room of the Waldorf.

Beverly sat in the *café* placidly sipping a whisky-and-soda.

“Well,” he mused, “Jim ought to feel devilish grateful. I don’t believe there’s a fellow in New York who could have managed it better—waiter!”

He paid his check and strolled away with the air of a man who is thoroughly pleased with himself.

The Puppet-Show.

IV.

**A LETTER FROM MISS TREVER TO HER
FRIEND, MISS CURTIS, OF ———VILLE, VA.**

“NOVEMBER 14, 1899.

“MY DEAREST GRACE: Forgive little Helen for not answering your letter sooner, for, my dear if you knew what I have been through in the past few weeks: the countless teas and dances I have attended, the number of visits I have been obliged to make, I think you would readily excuse my neglect.

“What do you think is my latest fad! You never could guess, so I'll tell you. I am going to sit for my portrait—doesn't that sound vain?

A Letter from Miss Trever.

However, don't for one little moment think I am desirous of doing it. I consented purely to oblige Mr. Winthrop, who has an artist friend he is trying to help along—a sort of charity, you see. The artist's name is Lee—Jim Lee—a very plain name, isn't it? Well, my dear, I must tell you about our visit to his studio—for, be it known, Mr. Winthrop accompanied auntie and me there to introduce us.

“He has a tiny cubby hole of a room, perched on the tiptop of an eight-story building. It's as much as one's life is worth to get up to it. I will say, however, that Mr. Lee has shown a great deal of taste in the arrangement and furnishing of his little den—he did it all himself, too. At least, so Mr. Winthrop told me. But Grace, you ought to see *him*. He is

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too funny for words! I'm sure he didn't expect us, for when we suddenly appeared on the scene he was painting away like mad, and the queer little jacket he wore was all streaked and splashed with various colors—quite like a mixed up rainbow. When Beverly introduced us, Mr. Lee turned as red as the sky he was painting—it was a sunset, I guess—and apologized for not being ready to receive us, etc., etc., etc.

“Lee is tall and somewhat angular, with curly brown hair and large dark eyes. Rather nice looking, in fact, except for his antiquated clothes and square-toed shoes. Why does he—an artist—wear square-toed shoes? I am sure they will drive me wild!

“He didn't say very much, but I caught him looking at me once or twice out of the corner of his eye as

A Letter from Miss Trever.

though he were calculating how large a canvas he would require to put me on, or how much paint he would need to paint me with. It exasperated me, so finally I turned and met his gaze in a questioning manner. The poor fellow turned redder than ever I really felt almost sorry for him. He murmured something about a fine view of the park, and pretended that he had been looking out of the window.

"A little later, however, when he was showing us some of his pictures, he condescended to come out of his shell, so to speak, and talked quite well. His work is remarkably clever, and I'm sure he has a great deal of talent. One picture I am just dying to possess. It is of a Spanish girl, with a crimson scarf wound round her head and shoulders, play-

The Puppet-Show.

ing a guitar. I want to pose that way, but auntie says it wouldn't do.

"At last we completed arrangements, and I am to have the supreme pleasure of soaring upward three times a week to sit there with auntie while he daubs away. I think that I may become accustomed to the rainbow jacket—it is really quite artistic—but the square-toed shoes, never!

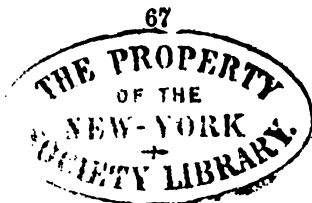
"I forgot to tell you about another inmate of the studio. His name is Dick, and he has lovely long ears, a black splotch on the middle of his back and—don't open your eyes wide, my dear, at this description; it is accurate, I assure you. Dick is a fox-terrier, and quite a gentlemanly dog, I imagine. He offered me his paw on leaving, which is more than his master did.

"Grace, I don't know why I have

A Letter from Miss Trever.

written you all this nonsense about pictures, and artists, and things, but I'm sure you must be tired of social twaddle by this time—my last letter was full of it. If you should wish to hear more about *him*, I'll write you later regarding our conversations—I suppose we shall have some conversations.

“Oh, but it is a funny, funny life one leads here—just like a little play in which comedy and tragedy are deliciously blended. We have our leading ladies and our leading men; our heroes, villains and buffoons. Every one is dissatisfied with his or her part, and they are all pushing, and elbowing, and fighting to gain the center of the stage. But what the play is about, my dear, or why it is being played, I haven't discovered, as yet.



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"I must close now, honey, as I have to dress for a luncheon. It seems perfect ages since I have seen you, and often when I have a fit of the blues I can scarcely keep myself from gwine straight back to ole Virginie. If you don't write immediately I'll never forgive you, and don't dare to omit one solitary item of gossip or scandal.

"Your loving HELEN.

"P.S. I forgot to tell you that I am going to pose in a gray tailor-made costume, and the dearest hat you ever saw in your life. The portrait is to be three-quarter length—Also, that Mr. Lee comes of a very good family, and used to be quite a society man. Imagine *him* as a society man! I suppose he gave it

A Letter from Miss Trever.

up for Art's sake, but I mean to ask him some day.

“N. B. Mr. Winthrop says that Mr. Lee is going to give a picture show later on, and that he wants to put my portrait in it. Such audacity! Of course I shouldn't *think* of allowing him to—at least, I don't believe I should.”

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V.

LEE'S STUDIO—ONE MONTH LATER.

It was a pretty studio. Lee had spared no pains in his efforts to make it appear homelike, as well as attractive. The room was small, but well lighted by a large double window, tastefully draped. Persian rugs, resplendent in Oriental hues, covered the floor, while a mammoth tiger skin—with head mounted and jaws agape—guarded the main entrance.

“I wish you'd give that beast

Lee's Studio—One Month Later.

away," remarked young Sethway on one occasion. "He eyes me from the time I come in to the time I go out."

As for furniture, Lee had accumulated a very odd assortment; no two pieces were alike, and a number of countries and periods seemed to be represented. In one corner was a Turkish divan, with cushions piled high; in another, a carved ebony cabinet, which a friend had brought from India. A *Louis Quinze* table occupied the center of the room, while against the wall, directly opposite, stood a "grandfather" clock, slowly ticking away the hours.

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On an easel, near the window, the artist had placed his "latest"—a portrait of Helen Trever, as yet unfinished.

"Dick," he said, addressing his small fox-terrier, who lay sprawled out on the divan, "Dick, do you think it looks anything like her?"

Dick's only reply was a prodigious yawn.

"I wonder," Lee continued, turning to the portrait, "if I have at last succeeded in getting your hair the right shade?"

He had grown quite accustomed of late to a one-sided conversation with the portrait. In some ways it was

Lee's Studio—One Month Later.

more gratifying than a conversation with the original, as—to the portrait—he could say what he pleased.

“Yes,” he went on, stepping back to survey his work from a distance, “it is right at last. I thought I should never get it right.”

Just then a stray sunbeam shot through the window, and creeping along the rug fell directly across the portrait's face.

“How beautiful!” the artist murmured softly.

A gay laugh broke the stillness of the room. Lee turned quickly, and much to his dismay saw Miss Trever framed in the doorway. She looked

The Puppet-Show.

particularly fetching in her trim tailor-made costume and *chic* picture hat, but Lee was far too embarrassed to notice this. He stood with his eyes glued to the floor, shifting his weight from one foot to the other, and trying to think of something appropriate to say.

“Let me thank you in the name of my portrait for your compliment, Mr. Lee,” Miss Trever at length exclaimed, laughingly sweeping him a courtesy. “Forgive me for breaking in upon you in this manner and taking you by surprise; but I knocked three times, and so—here’s auntie,” she added, for want of something better.

Lee's Studio—One Month Later.

Lee greeted Miss Brand with unusual warmth. For the first time in his life he felt glad to see her. While he was assisting in the removal of her numerous wraps, Helen crossed the room, and sitting down opposite the portrait surveyed it critically.

“Well,” Lee exclaimed, after he had settled Miss Brand to her liking, “do you think I have improved it, Miss Trever?”

“Yes,” she replied slowly, “it is certainly better, much better!—except the hair. I suppose you haven’t finished that yet?”

“What don’t you like about it?” he asked, trying not to show his despair.

The Puppet-Show.

"I don't exactly know, except that it looks wrong. Doesn't it, auntie?"

Miss Brand waddled across the room, and adjusting her spectacles examined the portrait with her air of a *connoisseuse*.

"You're too fussy, Helen," she remarked, after carefully going over every inch of the canvas. "I don't see how Mr. Lee can improve it any; it is certainly better looking than you are, now."

"Oh, auntie!" laughed Miss Trever, "you don't know any more about art than Dick the fox-terrier does. It's the fashion now-a-days to paint portraits a little bit on the ideal."

Lee's Studio—One Month Later.

"That settles it," replied Miss Brand tartly, as she waddled back to her corner.

Lee, meanwhile, had been arranging his brushes and colors.

"Miss Trever," he said with an amused smile, "if you will kindly sit here, I'll add a few last touches to the dress; a little more to the left—there, that's it."

"Does my chattering bother you, Mr. Lee?"

"No, indeed," he replied, taking up his palette, "on the contrary, it pleases me." Then he added rather awkwardly: "You know a person's face is more animated when talking."

The Puppet-Show.

"But you are working on the dress," she said, highly amused at the poor fellow's confusion.

"Ye—yes," he stammered, "just now, but—but there are a few flesh tints to be put in yet."

"When will the picture be finished?" she asked, obligingly changing the subject.

He painted in silence a moment, and then said slowly:

"This is your last sitting, Miss Trever."

She looked at him in surprise.

"Why, surely you won't be able to finish it to-day?"

"No, it won't be quite finished, but

Lee's Studio—One Month Later.

—but I can do the rest from memory, unless——”

“I won't let you,” Miss Trever interrupted gayly. “You'd probably spoil it. I'm going to give you at least two more sittings.”

“How good of you,” Lee exclaimed, dipping his brush in the wrong color.

“I want my portrait to be the best thing you have ever done,” Miss Trever went on, “so I am going to help you all I can—that is, if you will let me,” she added archly.

It is hard to say what Lee might have answered had not Miss Brand interposed just then.

“Mr. Lee,” she suddenly exclaimed,

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her rasping voice sounding more rasping than ever, "Mr. Lee, would you mind telling me what this picture represents?" and she handed him, upside down, a sketch which happened to be lying on the table.

The artist satisfied Miss Brand's curiosity, and then returned to Helen, and the portrait. For some time he worked in silence, Miss Trever apparently wrapped in deep thought. Suddenly she looked up and said:

"Mr. Lee, I think you are to be envied. '

"Why, Miss Trever?"

"Because you have an *object*."

"An object? I don't understand."

Lee's Studio—One Month Later.

"I mean," she answered, "that you have something to fight for, something to live for—some day you will be a great artist!"

He smiled faintly. "And suppose the 'some day,' never comes?"

"It will, I know it will,," she replied earnestly. "You are not a man who will be satisfied with climbing halfway up the mountain. You will fight your way to the summit."

"I will not loiter at the base from lack of ambition," Lee said. "I love art too dearly. But there are certain obstacles on the mountain side, Miss Trever, which we cannot pass through

The Puppet-Show.

the aid of ambition alone. Sometimes a slippery rock blocks our path, and we gain a foothold only to slide back. Sometimes the inevitable vines of fate trip us up, and we fall by the wayside—never to rise.”

“As for the rock,” she laughed, “niches of perseverance will enable you to climb over it.”

“And the vines of fate?”

“Fate is just as apt to be kindly as treacherous.”

“I see you are bound to encourage,” Lee said with a smile.

“Why not!” she exclaimed warmly. “I often wish that I had been born a man, and could struggle, and fight,

Lee's Studio—One Month Later.

and finally force the world to recognize me. To feel that you have accomplished something!—that you have conquered! Oh, it must be glorious!" Then, drawing a sigh, she added: "A woman can do so little. I've never even cared enough about anything to try and do it well."

"Have you no hobby?" Lee asked, pausing to study an effect.

"I don't believe so," Miss Trever answered dolefully. "At one time I was fond of music, and learned to play a little, but I soon tired of it. Somehow I tire of everything."

"And of everybody?"

She looked at him coquettishly.

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"No-o, not quite everybody."

Lee's face brightened.

"Auntie, for instance; I never tire of her."

"No, of course not;" he remarked, throwing a brush down savagely.

"Do you tire of people easily?" she asked.

"No, Miss Trever, not when I have once made up my mind that I like them."

"And girls?" she went on, "you think them nuisances and bores, don't you? Come, be honest!"

"No," Lee said; "that is, not *all* girls."

"Will you answer me one more

Lee's Studio—One Month Later.

question," she asked after a moment's pause.

"A dozen, if it is in my power."

"And you will tell the exact truth?"

"By all means."

"Well," she said, "first tell me what sort of a girl you admire—what kind of a girl do you really like?"

"That's rather a difficult question to answer," was his evasive reply.

"You are an artist, and must have an ideal."

He nodded.

"Oh," she exclaimed, looking up in eager expectation, "I'm crazy to know what she's like. Can't you paint me

The Puppet-Show.

her picture?—in words, I mean. Come, now; you promised.”

“I’ll do my best,” Lee replied, “but I’m not very good at word painting. First of all, she belongs to the sweet, womanly type; the sort of a girl a fellow couldn’t help looking up to and admiring.”

“That’s a good beginning,” Miss Trever remarked. “Go on!”

“She possesses both amiability and tact,” he continued, “and above all, she is thoroughly sincere. Then——”

“Stop, stop!” Miss Trever cried, raising her hands in mock horror. “There never was a girl as perfect as all that.”

Lee's Studio—One Month Later.

The artist smiled. "We are discussing ideals, Miss Trever, not girls."

"Indeed!" she exclaimed, instinctively glancing in a little mirror above the mantel, "and has she a hump on her back, or perhaps one green eye? You never said a word about her appearance."

"Excuse me," said Lee, apologetically, "I was going to bring that in later. Beauty, after all, is a second consideration."

"Oh, really!" Miss Trever exclaimed, somewhat ruffled. "Well, I don't like your ideal at all. She ought to be locked up in a glass case, or labelled 'hands off.' The

The Puppet-Show.

trouble with the average man is that he expects too much."

"And often draws a blank," Lee added.

"Exactly," Miss Trever said. "When one expects too much, one is very apt to be disappointed—like the greedy little bee in the song."

"What song is that?" he asked.

Just then a slight snore arose from Miss Brand's corner. The thoughtful chaperon had fallen asleep over her novel.

Helen glanced at Miss Brand, and then looked at the artist with a mischievous twinkle in her eyes.

"Would you like to hear it?" she

Lee's Studio—One Month Later.

asked, *sotto voce*. "It's nothing but a simple negro melody."

Without waiting for him to acquiesce, she tiptoed across the room and lifted from the wall an old Spanish guitar.

"If auntie wakes, she'll stop me," Helen whispered, resuming her seat. "Auntie doesn't approve of nigger songs, as she calls them."

"I trust you won't disturb her then," Lee replied, casting a threatening glance at poor Miss Brand.

Miss Trever hugged the guitar lovingly, and running her fingers across the strings, she sang in a low, sweet voice:

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“Dar was once a bee,
Who libed in a tree,
An’ he felt mighty fine.
De honey he would steal,
From de clover in de fiel’
An’ de blossoms on de watermelon vine,
Yas,—de blossoms on de watermelon vine.

“In a window near,
One day did appear
Some roses red an’ blue.
’Lowed de greedy little bee,
‘Lot’s of honey’s dar fo’ me!’
An’ he quickly to de lubly roses flew,
Yas,—he quickly to de lubly roses flew.

“But sad fo’ to say,
All de roses gay,
Of wax an’ paint were made,
An’ dey stuck his legs so fas’
Dat he couldn’t move at las’
So right dar dis foolish bee has eber stayed,
Yas,—right dar dis foolish bee has eber
stayed.”

Lee's Studio—One Month Later.

As the last note died away Miss Brand sat up with a jerk.

"Helen, what are you doing?" she inquired sleepily.

"Admiring Mr. Lee's guitar, auntie. Isn't it a beauty?"

"I thought I heard some music," Miss Brand remarked, groping underneath the chair for her spectacles.

Helen glanced warningly at the artist.

"A hand-organ was playing a minute ago," she said, assuming an innocent expression; "you probably heard that, auntie."

Miss Brand secured her spectacles, and carefully adjusted them before

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replying. "It didn't sound exactly like a hand-organ," she answered, "but maybe it was. Hadn't we better be going, Helen? You know you have a luncheon at two."

Lee, who meanwhile had been completely absorbed in studying the portrait from different points of view, now turned to Helen, saying in a matter-of-fact manner:

"I have finished the dress, Miss Trever; does it come up to your expectations?"

"It's charming," she replied, examining the portrait with interest. "Just look, auntie!"

"Shall we say Monday, for the next

Lee's Studio—One Month Later.

sitting?" he asked—then added in an undertone: "I want to thank you for the song; it was so good of you—and——"

She interrupted him with an impatient gesture.

"I won't be able to come Monday, Mr. Lee; make it Tuesday, at eleven."

"That will suit me very well," he replied, looking a trifle crestfallen.

In endeavoring to fasten her cape, Miss Trever—by accident of course—loosened a bunch of violets which fell to the floor. Lee quickly stooped for them.

"I have noticed," he said, "that

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violets are the only flowers you ever wear."

"Yes," Miss Trever replied, struggling with her cape, "they are the only flowers I care for."

He held the violets out to her a little reluctantly, and she made a motion as if about to take them. Changing her mind, she drew back, whispering: "You may keep them."

Miss Brand had by this time gathered together her various belongings, and reached the door. She turned, and fixing her keen eyes on the artist, said sharply: "Helen, why does it always take you so long to put on your wraps!"

Lee's Studio—One Month Later.

Poor Lee appeared very much confused, but Miss Trever only laughed.

"I'm coming, auntie—next Tuesday at eleven, Mr. Lee," and with a formal nod, she swept out of the room.

"Miss Helen, some more flowers," said the maid, entering Miss Trever's room the following evening.

"Roses, Marie?" inquired Helen, who was arranging her hair before the mirror.

"No, miss; violets."

Miss Trever turned, and taking the box quickly cut the dainty purple ribbon which encircled it. "'Bobby,' I suppose," she murmured a little

The Puppet-Show.

impatiently. "I should think by this time he'd be tired of sending me flowers." Off came the cover. Carelessly pushing aside the oiled paper, she took out a small envelope and glanced at the card within. It was not "Bobby," after all.

Beverly Winthrop was just back from Tuxedo. He had been spending a couple of weeks there with a golf-playing Englishman, who, much to Winthrop's disgust, had beaten him.

"Hang it all," he growled, fiercely biting the end off a cigar and throwing himself on the couch. "Of course Hastings will crow over me at the

Lee's Studio—One Month Later.

clubs; don't know as I blame him, either—just my luck!"

To ease his ruffled temper he picked up a copy of *Town Topics*, and ran his eye over the columns.

"Here's a lot more about Miss Trever; complimentary, by jove! H'm, that girl is a wonder; takes every one in. Old Jim will prove too much for her, though. She won't be able to budge him. Rum chap! impressionless as a stone. Great Scott, what conceit some women have!"

Jones entered with a note. "No answer, sir," he said.

"Hello!" exclaimed Winthrop, "I'd know that handwriting anywhere.

The Puppet-Show.

Wonder what she wants now!" He broke the seal:

"Dear Mr. Winthrop: Although the portrait is not quite finished I have already accomplished what you considered impossible, and if you will call to-morrow afternoon about five, I shall endeavor to prove that you owe me a bracelet.

"Very sincerely,

"Helen Dwight Trever.

"P. S. Please accept my most sincere sympathy.

"December 16th."

The note fell to the floor.

"Jones," Beverly Winthrop cried.

"bring me a whisky-and-soda!"

The Astoria Suite.

VI.

THE ASTORIA SUITE.

BEVERLY's prophecy proved correct. A number of the smart set dropped in—apparently to view Lee's pictures, but in reality to stare at the portrait of Miss Trever—and by four o'clock the two parlors reserved for the occasion were uncomfortably crowded.

The artist's exhibit comprised several "landscapes," some interesting studies of French peasant life, and—as a *piece de resistance*—the much talked of portrait. This was hung in

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the place of honor opposite the main entrance, and a little knot of people continually gathered around it, to condemn, criticise or admire.

"Dear me," remarked a tall, hopelessly plain young lady, raising her lorgnettes in a very superior manner, "how it flatters her!"

"Sh! Maud," cautioned the young lady's mother, "some one might hear you."

"I always considered her so unattractive," Maud went on; "rather ordinary, too. Come, mamma, let's look at that pretty landscape over there."

A little Frenchman elbowed his way closer.

The Astoria Suite.

"*Mon Dieu!*" he exclaimed excitedly, *mademoiselle* must be *une ange*. In Paris we have *beaucoup de belles femmes*, but dis one, ah—" He clasped his hands in an overflow of admiration.

"Ye-s," drawled his friend, a typical New Yorker, and cold as a fish in the foreigner's eyes, "Miss Trever's handsome enough. The chap who did this portrait is awfully devoted — some say they're engaged. Don't believe it, though; he's not a good *parti*. Family well enough, and all that, but poor as Tim crow. Hello, there's Mrs. Pemberton Warren!—didn't expect to see her here.

The Puppet-Show.

Come on, I want to introduce you; she's a fine woman, and"—he added in an undertone—"well worth cultivating."

Presently Beverly Winthrop put in an appearance. He paused in the doorway a moment, glancing around, and then spying his friend Lee at the farther end of the room, leisurely threaded his way in that direction.

"Old man," he exclaimed, grasping the artist's hand, "you're to be congratulated. This is one of the most crowded affairs I've been to of late—and the *right* people, too," he added in a whisper.

Lee's face brightened.

The Astoria Suite-

"Do you really think it such a success, Beverly? I want to thank you for all you've done for me. I never should have succeeded, if——"

"Never mind about thanks," interrupted Beverly hastily. "What I want to know is, have you made up your mind about the trip?"

"With you and Sethway?"

"Yes," Winthrop replied, "we sail for Southampton week after next."

Jim hesitated a moment.

"I have been considering it, Beverly," he finally said, "and I'd like to go with you fellows ever so much, but somehow I don't feel that I ought to leave my work, and—and——"

The Puppet-Show.

His chum interrupted him with an impatient gesture. "It isn't your work that is keeping you—I know that well enough."

"What is it, then?" exclaimed the artist hotly.

"Why don't you say: *Who is she?*"

Lee flushed visibly. "I suppose," he said, "you are referring to Miss Trever?"

"Yes," Beverly replied, "that is it exactly."

An awkward silence followed, broken only by the hum of conversation around them. At length Winthrop spoke again:

The Astoria Suite.

"Jim, I'd like to ask you one question. We've been friends so long that I don't think you'll take offense."

"Well, Beverly?"

Winthrop drew his friend to one side. "Jim," he said earnestly, "are you really very fond of her?"

Lee's face turned crimson. "What right have you to ask?" he said impatiently.

Winthrop fidgeted from one foot to the other: the task he had taken upon himself to perform was more unpleasant than he had anticipated.

"They're talking at the clubs," he finally blurted out; "they say she's making a fool of you."

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Jim's eyes glittered. "They are liars," he muttered.

Without a word, Beverly turned to go; checking himself, however, he said quietly: "Jim, old man, I hope you won't feel hard against me for telling you this. I—I couldn't stand by and see my chum's heart broken, without—without—oh, I can't very well explain here, Jim. Come to my rooms later. There is something else I think you ought to know."

Lee hesitated, but it was only for an instant; he turned and grasped Winthrop's hand with a hearty grip; their eyes met, and each understood the other.

The Astoria Suite.

Helen and her chaperon did not arrive until quite late—scarcely a dozen people, in fact, still remained. Lee, who had been watching for Miss Trever all the afternoon, was at her side in an instant.

“I’m so glad you’ve come,” he said, addressing Helen, and bowing to Miss Brand. “I was beginning to fear that you had forgotten all about it.”

Miss Trever looked at him reproachfully, and then laughingly answered: “Auntie is the one to blame, Mr. Lee. We were at a stupid musical, and I couldn’t get her away.”

“Nonsense, Helen,” snapped Miss

The Puppet-Show.

Brand, who was both tired and out of humor. "You wanted to stay and hear Melba yourself."

Before Miss Trever could retaliate, Bobby Cunningham rushed up. He was a cute little fellow with a round, rosy face and innocent expression, which had won for him the *sobriquet* of Cupid. Lee detested harmless little Bobby.

"Tho very glad to thee you, Mith Twever," Cunningham chirped—he always spoke with a slight lisp—"I've just been admiring your portwit." Here he paused and held out a limp hand for Helen to shake.

"How exceedingly kind of you, Mr.

The Astoria Suite.

Cunninghart," she replied, intensely amused at the savage scowl on Lee's face. "Do you think it's a good likeness?"

"Yeth," Bobby answered, grinning from ear to ear. "It ith very natuwil."

Miss Trever turned to Lee, in order to hide a smile. "Come, Mr. Artist," she exclaimed gayly; "do your duty! I want to see each and every one of the pictures. Auntie, I am sure Mr. Cunninghamhart will be more than pleased to show you the different works of art; Mr. Cunninghamhart is such an excellent critic.

"Tho delighted," lisped Bobby, bowing gallantly. He looked the re-

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verse, however, and once more Lee felt happy.

"Well," she asked, as they slowly circled the room. "Are you satisfied?"

"In what way, Miss Trever?" responded the artist.

"How stupid you are! Hasn't this affair been a great success?"

"Yes, lots of people have been here."

"Isn't that all you want?" she exclaimed a little impatiently.

He looked at her a moment and then replied earnestly: "No, Miss Trever, not all."

Something in his tone aroused her curiosity.

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“Mr. Lee, why do you invariably speak in riddles?”

“One cannot always say what one wishes to, Miss Trever,” was his somewhat evasive reply. Then he added, as if by second thought: “Do you find my riddles so very difficult to solve?”

She hesitated a moment, but the spirit of mischief predominated. Drawing herself up proudly, she squelched the unfortunate artist with a single glance, and then inquired icily: “Why do you imagine I have ever tried to solve them, Mr. Lee?”

Poor Jim became very much confused at once. “I—I’m—sure I don’t know,”

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he stammered. "How do you like this picture, Miss Trever? It's—it's a favorite of mine."

"What have you named it?" she asked, pausing in front of the picture, and trying not to smile.

"Eh?—oh— Country Courtship," Lee replied, more embarrassed than ever.

Miss Trever looked at him a moment, her eyes brimming over with joy.

"What a faculty you have for choosing names, Mr. Lee. This picture, for instance, couldn't be christened more appropriately. Country Courtship!—Oh, how happy they look! Do they really exist?—I mean, is this a study from life?"

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"Ye-yes," he answered, with an unpleasant feeling that she was laughing at him, "they are Normandy peasants. The fellow was a sort of guide; I used to chat with him now and again, and one day coming upon him as he sat with his sweetheart, I sketched them just as you see them in the picture."

"How very interesting!" she exclaimed, bending a little nearer. "Quite romantic, too. I wonder what has become of them?"

"They are married," Lee replied abstractedly.

Miss Trever fixed her eyes on him as she remarked demurely: "A pretty

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ending to your story, don't you think so, Mr. Lee?"

A few minutes later, having viewed all the pictures, they took possession of a sofa half-hidden behind some palms.

"Whose portrait are you going to paint next?" she asked abruptly.

"I haven't the slightest idea," was Lee's rather unsatisfactory reply.

"You speak as though you didn't care."

"I don't care."

She held up her hands in mock horror. "What a marvelous transformation! You used to be so saturated with art that I hardly dared to

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mention another subject in your presence."

Lee smiled. "You think I have changed?" he queried.

"Yes," she laughed, "you have certainly reformed. Let me congratulate you."

He made no reply, and at length she asked: "What's the matter? Have I offended you?"

"No," he answered slowly. "I was just thinking that—that I owed you an apology."

"An apology! For what?"

"When I first knew you, I did you a great injustice." She glanced at him inquiringly, but said nothing.

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"I used to think you insincere and—and selfish," he continued in a low, earnest voice. "I used to wonder if you had ever wasted a thought on any one but yourself, until—" He paused abruptly.

"Well," she exclaimed, looking at him fixedly, and bending a little nearer, "until?"

"One day in the studio. The day you gave me the violets."

Miss Trever made no reply. She was nervously playing with her bracelet—the one Beverly Winthrop had given her—turning it around and around as if to admire the jewelled setting.

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"I realized then how I had misjudged you," Lee went on, "and——"

With a quick, impetuous gesture she silenced him. Lee noticed that she appeared agitated, and wondered at the cause of it.

"Suppose," Miss Trever exclaimed, "you were to discover that your first impression of me was the correct one."

He looked at her blankly.

"How do you know that I haven't been simply playing a part?"

"Playing a part!" Lee exclaimed in surprise. "I don't understand."

Her cheeks were burning now and her eyes bright with excitement.

"If, for instance, some one should tell

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you that I—that I had purposely deceived you to—to—well, to gratify a whim, what would you think of me?”

He was silent.

“Why don’t you reply!” she exclaimed almost fiercely. “What would you think of me?”

“You wish an honest answer?”

Miss Trever only nodded, but her eyes spoke volumes.

“I should not believe it,” Lee said quietly.

An expression of relief came and went, and she was all smiles in an instant. “Thank you,” she said, simply—and then added in a lower tone: “I don’t think you would.”

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A short pause followed. At length Lee exclaimed abruptly: "Miss Trever, I want to thank you for all the kindness you have shown me. This may be the last opportunity I shall have, and——"

"The last opportunity!" she interrupted. "What do you mean by the last opportunity?"

"I am thinking of going away," he replied slowly.

"Going away! Where? When?"

"You've heard of the trip Beverly Winthrop and young Sethway are going to take, on Sethway's yacht haven't you?"

She nodded.

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"Sethway has invited me to join them."

"For how long?"

"A year or more. They are going to England and from there to India."

"And—and have you accepted?" she inquired, turning slightly as he attempted to get a glimpse of her face.

"Not yet," Lee replied. "Why do you ask?"

No response.

Moved by impulse, he leaned forward and made a captive of her hand. "I want you to decide for me," he whispered. "Shall I go, Helen dear, or—or stay?"

"Mith Twever," lisped a well-

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known voice, from the other side of the palms, "excuse me for interrupting you, but Mith Bwand sent me. I believe she is weady to leave."

"Oh, thank you, Mr. Cunninghamart," Helen exclaimed, snatching her hand away and hastily rising; then as Bobby's round, jovial face appeared through the palms, she added, "Mr. Lee and I have been sitting here discussing—er—pictures, and I had forgotten how late it was. Come, Mr. Lee, I'm afraid auntie will be very cross with me for keeping her waiting so long."

As they moved away, Bobby gayly chatting with Miss Trever about this,

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that, and the other thing, Lee busied himself in trying to solve the following problem: 'Why are such fellows as Cunninghart created?'

At the door Miss Trever paused for a few last words.

"Have you a pencil, Mr. Cunninghart?" she asked, smiling on him prettily. "I want to make a note about one of the pictures."

Bobby made a grab at the little gold pencil on his watch chain, snapping the ring in his eagerness to oblige. Miss Trever scribbled something on the catalogue she held, and handing this to the artist, she said with a meaning look: "As a souvenir of our

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conversation, Mr. Lee. Come, auntie, I'm ready," and with a nod to each of the men, she was gone.

Lee glanced at the catalogue. On it's margin Miss Trever had written the word *Stay*.

Young Cunningham remained to the last; it was his invariable custom. Lee, who was unpleasantly aware of this, tried his best to avoid him. He pretended to be very much occupied in giving some instructions to an attendant, and at length — perceiving Cunningham was no longer in the room—made a dash for the entrance. Bobby was not to be fooled in this way, however. He was lying

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in wait just outside, and before Lee could escape he stepped into the room, neatly cornering the unfortunate artist.

"You're not going yet, are you?" Cunninghart drawled, a sickly smile overspreading his countenance.

"I have an engagement at the club," was Lee's terse reply.

Bobby edged a little nearer the door, as if to prevent Lee's exit. "Mith Twever's a charming girl, don't you think tho?" he asked.

"Very," Lee replied, preparing for hasty flight by picking up his overcoat.

"Tho clever, too," Bobby went

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on with a giggle. "Did you ever hear how the did Winthrop out of a bwacelet?"

Jim paused with his overcoat half on. "How was that?" he asked quickly.

"Mith Twever told my thither about it thome time ago," Cunninghamhart replied, "and I heard it from her. I pwomised not to repeat it, so I'm afwaid I can't tell you."

"No," Lee agreed, slowly drawing on his gloves, "I'm afraid you can't." He knew perfectly well that Cunninghamhart would reveal everything without urging.

"Perwaps, since Mith Twever is a

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particular friend of yours, she wouldn't mind you're knowing?" Bobby at length suggested.

"You must use your own discretion as to that," Lee answered, buttoning his gloves.

Bobby could no longer restrain himself. "You thee," he lisped, almost bursting with importance, "Beverly knew of a chap, a thort of a fool, I thuppose; didn't care for girls, and all that kind of thing."

"Really!" exclaimed Lee, becoming interested.

"Well," Bobby continued, "Mith Twever bet Winthrop that the could make an impwession on this fellow;

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if the thuctheeded, Winthrop was to
pwesent her with a bwacelet."

Lee half-turned with a slight ex-
clamation.

"Of course Mith Twever won,"
Cunninghart went on. "Before a
month was up, the fellow was send-
ing her flowers and things; and the
beth of it is," he chuckled, "old
Beverly had to fork over the bwace-
let. Don'th you think it'th a fine
one on Bev?"—Bobby fairly wriggled
with delight.

Lee did not reply. He stood as
though riveted to the spot; his back
toward Cunninghamhart, his eyes fixed on
the portrait of Helen Trever. At

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length he turned slowly, and when he spoke his voice sounded harsh and strange.

“Who is this fellow Miss Trevor made a dupe of?”

Bobby sobered in an instant. “Wha—what’th the matter,” he stammered, frightened by the artist’s tone and appearance. “Are you ill, Lee? You’d better come and have a dwink, right away.”

“Who is he?” Lee repeated sharply.

“I—I don’t know,” Bobby replied, trembling in every limb. “I couldn’t find out. Do—do you know?”

“I might be able to guess,” Lee

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muttered. Picking up his hat, he slowly moved toward the door.

“Where are you going?” Bobby asked, looking at the artist timidly.

Lee paused on the threshold. He was very pale, and as he buttoned up his coat his hands trembled visibly.

“I am going,” he replied with a forced laugh, “to find that fellow—the one she fooled so cleverly. I’m sure he’ll enjoy your story—as much as I have.”

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VII.

IN WINTHROP'S ROOMS.

BEVERLY was preparing for his expectant trip. Scattered about the room in great confusion were all sorts of odds and ends; from a new-fangled fish-hook, to an *édition de luxe* of Thackeray which he intended to present to the yacht's library. Firearms he had in plenty—almost enough to stock a small arsenal; while from the bed, towered a pyramid of cartridge boxes.

In Winthrop's Rooms.

"Jones," Winthrop suddenly exclaimed, "don't work so hard! It isn't good for you."

The patient valet had paused in his labor to study the intricacies of a patent folding-cot. Laying it aside with a look of disdain, he went on placing his master's clothes in one of the five large trunks. At length, with a woebegone expression, he remarked:

"A great many things to put in these few trunks, sir."

"Well," growled Winthrop, who was busy untangling a mass of fish-line, "what won't go in, must be left out. Do you think I want to be bothered with a lot of luggage!"

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“No, sir; quite right, sir,” the valet replied, with a glance at the cot. “I was thinking, sir, that perhaps I had better leave out that—that contrivance. It will occupy a large amount of space.”

Winthrop bestowed on him a withering glance. “I presume you expect me to lie on the cold ground, just because you’re too lazy to pack my cot?”

Jones was quite equal to the emergency. “Oh, no, sir,” he replied with a bland smile. “I only meant that it would be a little handier to roll it up with the umbrellas, sir.”

“Jones,” Beverly remarked, “you’re

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an example of wasted talent—you ought to have been a lawyer.”

“Yes, sir,” Jones answered, diving into the trunk to hide a grin.

Just then the door opened, and Jim Lee entered unannounced.

“Hello, Jim,” cried Beverly cheerily. “Sit down, if you can find a place unoccupied. Jones, empty that chair for Mr. Lee. What do you think of my new forty-five-ninety, old man? Isn’t it a beauty! Just came up from the store to-day, and—hello!”—noticing his chum’s agitated appearance. “What’s the matter, Jim? Has something gone wrong? You’re as white as sugar.”

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"Only one of my beastly headaches," muttered Lee, glancing at the valet and then giving Beverly a meaning look. "I'd like some whisky, if you have it handy."

"Of course," Beverly answered, taking a decanter, siphon and two glasses from a cupboard. Then turning to his man, he said: "Jones, go to Spaulding's, and see why they haven't sent the things I bought yesterday."

When the servant had gone, Jim sprang to his feet and crossing the room laid his hand on Winthrop's arm.

"For God's sake, Beverly, tell me the truth about Miss Trever. Is this—this story of the bet true?"

In Winthrop's Rooms.

Winthrop stood as if frozen to the spot. "How did you hear?" he murmured.

"Answer me!" Jim cried, holding Winthrop's arm. "Is this story true?"

Winthrop lowered his eyes. For the first time in his life he could not meet his chum's gaze. "Yes," he said, in a voice so low the other could scarcely hear him, "it is true, Jim."

The artist gradually relinquished his hold on Beverly's arm. He seemed like one in a dream, and for several moments stared blankly at his friend. Then, fully realizing the truth, he sank into a chair and buried his face in his hands.

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For some time there was a silence, broken only by the tick, tick of the little clock on the mantel-piece, and a faint hum of noises from the street below. At last Beverly spoke:

“Jim, I’m afraid you’ll think that I’ve played you a mean trick—I know it looks so—but on my word of honor, as a gentleman and a friend, I never thought, for one moment, that things would turn out the way they have.”

He paused, glancing at the artist inquiringly. Lee, however, did not even look up.

“It was all in jest at the start,”

In Winthrop's Rooms.

Beverly went on, "and I didn't even consider the possibility of a serious ending. If it had been any other fellow, Jim, I should have told him the whole thing at once; but, knowing you as I did—or rather, as I thought I did—and having told you all about her previous affairs with Sethway and the rest, I thought —"

"You thought I knew enough to prevent her making a fool of me?" said the artist slowly.

"That's it," Winthrop continued; "and it is only in the last week that I realized what a confounded mess things were in. I tried to tell

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you to-day, Jim; I did my best—but I suppose it was too late.”

“Yes,” Lee replied in a dazed manner, “it was.”

Winthrop crossed the room and gently laid his hand on Jim’s shoulder.

“Old fellow,” he said, touched by the look of misery on his chum’s face, “I would give anything I possess if I could undo the mischief I’ve unmeaningly caused. Can you forgive me, Jim?”

“It’s all right, Bev.,” the artist exclaimed, pulling himself together with an effort, and grasping Winthrop’s proffered hand. “It—it just unnerved me a bit, at first. She

In Winthrop's Rooms.

seemed to care for me, you know, and, I—I was fool enough to believe in her—to think her nature true and honest, when all the time she was only playing a part. A mere actress, Beverly!"

He bent his head once more in an overflow of emotion.

A short pause followed. Then Winthrop said quietly: "Try not to feel too hard toward the girl, Jim. It was mostly my fault, and—and after all, why should you expect her to remain frank and honest when her surroundings are absolutely artificial. We all have to play our parts, Jim. That is society!"

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Lee rose with a gesture of disgust. "I understand," he exclaimed bitterly. "Thank God, I have found it out!" For a few moments he paced up and down the room, and then pausing in front of Beverly, asked in a calmer voice: "You will see Sethway at the club to-night, I suppose?"

"Of course; he is going to dine with me. Will you join us, Jim?"

Lee shook his head. "I want you to give Sethway a message for me."

"Certainly; what is it?"

"That I will be very glad to accept his invitation."

"What!" cried Beverly, delighted. "You will come with us on the trip?"

In Winthrop's Rooms.

"Yes," Lee replied despondently, "I might as well go to India, as anywhere else."

"Look here, Jim," Beverly exclaimed, sitting on the lounge and pulling his chum down beside him. "I'm going to give you a good talking to. Now listen to me: You've had a hard knock, but it's nothing you won't get over. Just make up your mind to forget her, once and for all. Oh, you needn't shake your head! I've been through it a dozen times, so I know what I'm talking about."

"You don't understand," replied the artist wearily. "On my part, this has been no mere flirtation."

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Winthrop shrugged his shoulders. "I can't expect you to believe me just yet," he said, "but by the time we arrive at Southampton, you'll feel like a new man. And when we reach Bombay—why, by that time, you will have forgotten that there's such a thing in the world as a girl."

Lee slowly rose, and crossing the room picked up hat and coat. "I hope you're right," he said.

"Now," exclaimed Beverly, jumping up, "come 'round to the club and we'll spend a jolly evening together. There's lots of things to talk over. Have you ever been aboard Sethway's yacht, the Shadow? I tell you she's

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a beauty—one hundred and twenty-five feet on the water line.”

“I’m much obliged, Beverly,” Jim replied, with a slight tremor in his voice; “there’s a lot of things to attend to at the studio, so I think I’ll devote this evening to—to work.”

“All right, only don’t look so deuced glum. I’ll drop in and see you in the morning. Yes, I won’t forget—good-by.”

“Poor fellow,” Beverly mused, after the door had closed on his chum; “he seems to take it devilish hard. Oh, well, he’s bound to forget her in time. It’s always the way—and it’s a lucky thing that it is, by jove!”

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Whistling a tune from the latest Casino "success," he went on with his packing. Beverly was at least a philosopher.

At Sherry's.

VIII.

AT SHERRY'S.

It was rumored that Mrs. Brander Wells' ball would prove one of the smartest affairs of the season, for, as every one knew, this lady particularly prided herself on the selectness of her visiting list.

"I don't see how you manage so well," a friend once said. "It is so difficult now-a-days to keep the *queer* people out."

"Oh," Mrs. Wells replied, "that is

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easy enough if one has a method. I always keep a *social register* by me, and from time to time mark with a red cross the names I consider undesirable; then, at the end of the year, I simply count up the crosses. It is really quite remarkable, my dear, the number of crosses that will accumulate in a year."

"But," her friend persisted, "suppose you are under obligations to some of the—er— crosses?"

Mrs. Wells smiled sweetly. "I have a plan for that, which I consider quite original. Once a year I give a small dance, or a large dinner to which only the crosses are invited. It works like

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a charm, my dear; they entertain each other, you see, and have a beautiful time."

For the ball to-night, however, only about two hundred invitations had been sent out, and not a single "cross" received one. By twelve the dancing was in full swing, and the floor resembled a veritable kaleidoscope. Around the door stood a little knot of men, who for the most part looked exceedingly weary and bored. Beverly Winthrop was one of these; he stood just back of the entrance, surveying the gay scene before him in an absent-minded manner, and from time to time exchanging a few words with the other

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men. He did not know exactly why he had come. Sethway and some other fellows were at *Koster and Bial's*, and Beverly had promised to join them there. At the last moment, however, he changed his mind, struggled into a dress suit, and went to the ball.

Suddenly his attention was attracted by a slight, graceful girl who had paused for a few moments to rest. She was entirely in white, with the exception of a red rose stuck coquettishly in her hair; and a huge fan of white ostrich feathers, wielded with *aplomb* and grace, added a stunning effect. It was Helen Trever, and in Winthrop's opinion, never had

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she appeared to better advantage. A number of men collected around her, clamoring for dances, and as Beverly came up, Miss Trever turned to a little blond chap who seemed to be more persistent than the rest.

"I'm very sorry, Mr. Evelyn," she said pleasantly, "but, really, I don't see how I can divide the seventh into any more portions. If one of my partners shouldn't appear, however——"

"Ah," Evelyn exclaimed, drawing himself up and trying to look imposing, "in that case, I will rush up and carry you off in triumph."

Miss Trever's eyes danced with

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mischief. Assuming as grave an expression as possible, she solemnly replied:

“Very gallant, Mr. Evelyn; but considering I’m fully a ‘head’ taller than you are, I’m afraid you’d find me a responsibility.”

A general laugh followed, in which poor Evelyn tried his best to join.

“*Touche!* Miss Trever,” he replied good-naturedly. “There’s no use trying to parry your thrusts. Here’s Beverly Winthrop; I’ll relinquish the field to him,” and thoroughly crushed the little fellow hurried away.

Miss Trever welcomed Beverly with a smile. “I was wondering where

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you were," she said. "How is it that you are so late?"

"I only dropped in for a few minutes," he replied, "just to claim that waltz you promised me a week ago."

She made a pretty gesture of dismay. "Now, what is a girl to do, when there aren't half enough dances to go round?"

"The next is a waltz, I believe?"

"Yes, but I promised it to Mr. Cunningham—the whole of it."

Just then the music struck up, and Miss Trever's ring of admirers scattered to find their partners.

"Come on," Beverly urged. "Cupid can wait for a dance, and I can't."

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“Well,” said Miss Trever, beginning to yield, “on one condition.”

“Granted before named.”

She playfully tapped his hand with her fan. “Don’t be so impulsive. I might ask you to do something you wouldn’t like at all—entertain Mr. Cunningham while I dance with another man, for instance.”

“I know you wouldn’t be so cruel as that,” was his laughing reply. “Do you realize we’re losing the best part of this delicious waltz?”

“That’s the condition. I want you to sit it out with me. There’s some—er—questions I should like to ask you.”

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"What do you say to the conservatory?"

"All right; we'll dance to the entrance."

He whirled her away, her feet scarcely seeming to touch the floor, and after reversing two or three times, landed her safely at the entrance. As the waltz was a very popular one, they found the conservatory almost deserted, and without difficulty secured a corner to suit them.

"Ah," she said, sitting down contentedly, "isn't it delightful here! I hope Cupid won't find us."

"I think there is great danger that he will," replied Winthrop slyly.

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Once more the fan was used as a weapon.

"I meant Mr. Cunningham, and you knew I did!" she exclaimed in pretty confusion. "Do be serious; you're a great deal nicer when you are."

"I'll be anything you like, if you won't bring that fan into play again," Beverly replied, rubbing his knuckles.

She opened the fan to its full extent, peering over the top coquettishly.

"A fan is a very useful weapon, Mr. Winthrop. What would a woman do without one?"

"I'm sure I don't know," he answered gravely. "Rely on sharp speeches and cutting glances, perhaps."

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She laughed gayly; "You're incorrigable to-night! Come, be good! I'm going to put you through a catechism."

"Close the fan, then."

"Are you afraid of it? Shame!"

"No, I'm only jealous of it. The thing's so large, I can't see your face when it's open."

With a playful gesture, she closed the fan and dropped it into her lap.

"Now for the catechism. Question number one: When are you going away?"

"The day after to-morrow, providing everything is ready."

"You and Mr. Sethway?" she in-

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quired—and then added archly: “How I will miss you both!”

“That is at least some consolation,” he replied gallantly.

Miss Trever clasped her hands enthusiastically. “Oh, what a time you will have! You are going to India, aren’t you, where all the tigers and things are? I thought so. Why wasn’t I born a man? It must be glorious; the excitement, the adventure of it all.”

“Yes, we are sure to have a good time,” Winthrop answered, intensely amused by her enthusiasm.

“It’s a pity you haven’t a larger party,” Miss Trever went on; “isn’t any one else going?”

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Winthrop smiled. He was delighted to know that she had not yet heard of Lee's decision.

"Oh," he replied carelessly shrugging his shoulders, "there's the captain and crew."

"I think some one told me that your friend Mr. Lee had been invited," she remarked, looking at him sharply.

"Yes, Sethway asked him to join us."

"Indeed!" with well assumed surprise. "Well, I suppose that Mr. Lee wouldn't care to leave his—his work, and go 'way out there—after succeeding so well with my portrait, too."

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"Yes," Winthrop replied gravely, "Jim certainly did succeed with that."

"Then there's all his friends. One never likes to leave one's friends. Do you think so?"

She was laughing now, and unconsciously keeping time to the music with her fan.

"Friends are easy to make now-a-days," Winthrop asserted, looking at her meaningly, "and easy to drop, too."

"Nonsense!" she exclaimed, with a swish of the fan, "real friendship is lasting. I wasn't speaking of society acquaintances."

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"I understand," he replied dryly.
"So you think that there are certain people Jim might find it hard to leave. Who, for instance?"

Miss Trever assumed an expression of complete surprise.

"Why, how should I know?" she answered innocently. "He must have some friends—every one has."

Beverly was not to be beaten like this.

"I know of one person," he said slowly, "Jim considered a friend, until——"

She turned to him with a flash of anger:

"Why don't you finish that sentence?"

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"I think you can finish it," he answered quietly.

"I suppose," Miss Trever said, touching her bracelet, "that you refer to this?"

Winthrop remained silent.

"I think you are playing the part of a coward!" she exclaimed excitedly; "to reproach me for it, when—when"—impulsively she pulled the bracelet off and threw it in his lap—"There, take it—I never want to see it again."

Winthrop picked up the pretty trifle and dropped it into his pocket. "One moment, Miss Trever," he said quietly, "please don't think that I

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introduced this subject in order to reproach you. It was for a very different reason—to ask you a straightforward question, in fact.”

“Well,” she replied in a calmer voice, “what is it?”

“You have won,” Beverly went on. “I was wrong—absolutely wrong—and am perfectly willing to admit it. Now, why do you still keep up the farce with Jim? What can you possibly gain by it?”

She laughed softly.

“I see, you are angry because Mr. Lee isn't going away with you. Perhaps you would like me to tell you why he isn't going?”

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"I think I know the reason."

"It is because I wish him to stay."

Her eyes were beaming now, and her cheeks fairly glowed from excitement.

"I understand," Beverly said. "A very good reason. And now will you answer one more question, Miss Trever?"

"Perhaps—what is it?"

"Why do you wish Jim Lee to stay?"

"Oh," with a little shrug of her shoulders, "for various reasons—to amuse me—to tease you."

"And suppose he objects?"

Miss Trever leaned back, slowly waving the fan to and fro.

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"Perhaps, Mr. Winthrop, you would like to make another wager?"

Beverly smiled broadly; his triumph was approaching.

"I see, you haven't heard," he said in a matter-of-fact way.

She was all eagerness in a moment. "Heard! Heard what?"

"Mr. Lee has altered his decision. He is going with us to India."

His revenge was complete. She drew back as if he had struck her in the face, and the color went, leaving her deadly pale. They were both silent. From the ballroom came the lively strains of *El Capitan*, intermingled with the hum of conver-

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sation and an occasional burst of laughter. At length struck by the girl's agitated appearance, he said rather awkwardly:

"It is—er—very warm in here, Miss Trever. Shall I bring you a glass of water?"

She was leaning forward in an attitude of thought, and appeared scarcely to have heard him. Her eyes were dim now, and Winthrop noted a suspicion of tears. At length looking up she asked in strange earnestness, and with a little catch in her voice:

"Does—does he know all?"

Winthrop nodded.

"You told him?"

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"No, I don't know how he heard."

She turned from him, and for an instant her heart shone in her eyes. Winthrop did not see, however, and had he seen, he would not have understood.

"Come!" Miss Trever exclaimed, rising, and making a pitiful attempt to assume her old gayety; "just hear that splendid two-step we've been missing! I may not see Mr. Lee again," she went on as they moved toward the entrance, "and I wish you would give him this message: say that—that I think he was very wise to alter his decision. Let me see—oh, yes; I promised this

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dance to Mr. Parsons. Never mind—come on; I feel just like it. You can have once around, if you hurry!”

“Ah,” thought Winthrop, “her pride at least has received a knockout blow!”

Away they glided, in and out among the other couples; Miss Trever dancing with gay *abandon*, and apparently lending her very soul to the music. Faster and faster they went. She did not realize it, however. It was all like a dream. She seemed to be in the studio once more, and Lee was saying to her: “I admire a girl who is honest and sincere—” . . . She remembered how she had laughed

At Sherry's.

over it at the time And
now, he was going away. She would
never see him again. And he knew
all: that she had purposely deceived
him—that the sentiments she had
expressed were false. . . .
Were they really false? Of course—
he thought so, anyway. . . .
Now the music stopped. . . . ,
Why were the people still whirling
round and round!
There stood Lee in the doorway.
. . . . He was pointing
his finger at her and laughing. . . .
She must tell him all. . . . She
must force him to listen. . . and
. . . . and. . .

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“Parsons, Parsons!” Winthrop cried,
“bring some water. Miss Trever has
fainted!”

At Sherry's.

IX.

LEE RECEIVES A VISITOR.

By the following afternoon, everything was in readiness for Lee's departure. The studio had been completely dismantled, and most of his furniture sent to storage. The day was a gray and cheerless one, and Lee, who sat in his large armchair before the fire, felt lonely and depressed. As he glanced around the room, his thoughts went back to the day he first entered it—three months

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previous: How eagerly he had scanned the bare walls, picturing what might be done to make the little studio bright and attractive! And at length when he was settled, what vigor, what boyish enthusiasm he had thrown into his work! How he had struggled and fought for success; with what keen delight had he dreamed of the future!—It made him smile now, to think of it.

Then she came. He recalled the day he first saw her, and how his artistic nature had been impressed by her beauty.—What a face for a picture! that was his first thought. From this point the chain of recollec-

Lee Receives a Visit.

tion became blurred and broken. He only remembered that the interest bestowed on the portrait, was soon transferred to the sitter. By degrees she interested him; then fascinated him; then became a part of his very existence. His enthusiasm for work vanished; his dreams of future success frittered away. He had found something far greater, far dearer—he knew what real love meant.

And now she had dropped out of his life; the blow was sudden; the awakening cruel. What was left—yes, what? he asked himself. Could he pick up his work where he had dropped it—continue the struggle? Could he think

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of those days, those weeks he had known her, merely as a pleasant dream worth tucking away in some corner of his memory? No—he could not. She had broken something besides his heart; she had broken his ambition.

The old clock, which still held its position in the corner, struck the hour of four. Lee—his meditations thus interrupted—rose from his seat by the fire, and busied himself in making a few final preparations. At half-past five he was to leave by train for Larchmont, where Winthrop and Sethway awaited him, and at an early hour the following morning they hoped to be underway.

Lee Receives a Visit.

As Lee drew up to the desk, his little fox-terrier came running across the room to greet him with a look of sagacity, and a meaning wag of his stubby tail.

"Well, old boy," Lee said, stroking the dog's head lovingly, "you'll never go back on me, will you?"

Dick replied with an expressive whine. It was the best he could do.

"Beverly wanted me to leave you behind," Lee went on. "The very idea of it! Dick, I believe you're the truest friend I have."

With a sigh he opened a little drawer in his desk, and gazed at the contents in silence. It contained me-

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mentos of the past: A gray glove, a dainty lace handkerchief, and a bunch of violets. Gathering them together, Lee crossed the room to drop them into the fire one by one—first the handkerchief; the glove quickly followed; and then—he glanced at the violets. Poor withered flowers! their freshness and beauty were gone, but a faint fragrance still remained. Turning away he slipped the violets into his pocket.

Just then the door was pushed open, and a negro entered. He was bent and wrinkled by time, but had bright, beady eyes, and a kindly though somewhat whimsical expres-

Lee Receives a Visit.

sion. His dress consisted of a faded plaid coat, that was much too short in the skirt, and a pair of baggy trousers, which were unnecessarily long; this inconvenience, however, he had ingeniously remedied by turning them up at the bottom. A bright bandanna handkerchief, loosely knotted at the throat, added a pleasing bit of color to the whole. It was Sisco, the artist's man of all work, a cheery, good-natured fellow, and quite a character. Sisco was caretaker of the studio when Lee rented it, and, being amused by the negro's odd appearance and quaint sayings, he had engaged him on the spot.

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"Is my luggage ready?" Lee asked, resuming his seat at the desk.

"Tink eberyting's ready, sah," Sisco replied, rubbing the back of his hand across his eyes. "I'se powerful sorry, you's goin', Mistah Lee."

"Yes, Sisco," the artist said, "I'm sorry too—just wait a minute: there's a note I want you to deliver."

He took some paper from a pigeon-hole, and dashed off a brief note, an amused expression on his face.

"There, Sisco," he said, handing him the letter, "take this to Miss Trever at once—there's no answer."

The negro fidgeted around, seeming loathe to go.

Lee Receives a Visit.

"Must want a tip," thought Lee. Thrusting his hand in his pocket, he pulled out a five-dollar bill. "Here, Sisco, remember me by this—now go; the note's very important." Once more Lee smiled meaningly.

Mumbling his thanks, Sisco pocketed the note and money; but instead of leaving the room he remained standing near the desk, a perplexed expression overshadowing his wrinkled face. "Mistah Lee!" he suddenly exclaimed.

"Haven't you gone yet?" the artist growled, looking up from some papers he was arranging.

"Mistah Lee, 'spect de boat you's

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gwine ter cross de ocean in, is a berry big boat?"

Lee eyed the old fellow curiously. What could be coming now!

"Yes, Sisco," he replied; "she's a large yacht. One hundred and twenty-five feet long, I believe."

"Lordy! dat's most a mile, ain't it?"

"No," replied the artist, laughing in spite of himself, "not quite so much as that."

"Do you think, sah, there'd be room for one mo' man, 'board dat yacht, 'lowin' he was berry small?" In his eagerness Sisco took a step forward and laid his trembling hand on Lee's shoulder.

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"Why, Sisco?" asked the artist kindly, amused by the old fellow's earnestness.

"'Cause I want ter go 'long wid yer, Mistah Lee. I want ter go powerful bad. Doesn't seem as if this 'ud be the same place when you're gone—you an' de dorg," he added, looking apologetically at Dick. "I knows I'm old and not berry much good no mo', but—but all I want's ma grub, and I'll treat yer bang up fine if you'll take me 'long, Mistah Lee."

Tears welled up in Jim's eyes. Sisco's devotion touched a sensitive spot in his heart. "There is some

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sincerity in the world, after all," he thought, and it made him feel better to think so.

"My good fellow," he said warmly, "I'd like nothing better than to take you with me, but I'm afraid it wouldn't be wise. The country I'm going to is far away, and the life will be a very hard and rough one. You wouldn't be contented, Sisco; it is better for you to stay here, where you have a good home."

Poor Sisco felt both disappointed and grieved.

"'Spect you're right, sah; 'spect you're right," he said, wiping his eyes with a corner of the bandanna,

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"but it's powerful hard ter leave you
—you an' de dorg."

He shuffled toward the door, now and again pausing to look back at his master in a way that would have been comical, had it not been pathetic. On reaching it, he paused, and his melanchoy expression suddenly changed to a broad grin. Plunging his hand into a capacious trousers' pocket, Sisco pulled out a miscellaneous collection of valuables, and after carefully selecting a small article from among them, once more approached his master's desk. Drawing himself up to his full height, and attempting to look as dignified as cir-

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cumstances would permit, he remarked gravely: "Mistah Lee, I done want ter make you a presentation."

"A what?" Lee replied, laying aside some letters. "What is it you want?"

A grieved expression overspread the negro's face. He had counted on making a great impression, and not even to be understood was bitter indeed. However, he put it down to ignorance on the part of his master, and so went on to explain: "I've somefin here dat's worth a heap, Mistah Lee, an' I'se a-gwine to make you a presentation of it."

"Oh," exclaimed the puzzled artist, "you mean a *presentation*."

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Sisco's ivories suddenly shone forth.

"Yes, sah, dat am de word, sure 'nuf—*presentation!* You jus' take dis an' tie him roun' your neck good an' hard; den nuffin' 'ill be able to touch you, no how. I've carried him fo' forty years, sah, an' neber been hoodooed once."

"What is it, Sisco?" Lee asked, taking the queer object held out to him, and examining it curiously.

"It am a rabbit's hind foot, sah. My ole mammy done give it to me, an' I knows he was caughted in a graveyard, right 'nuf."

After delivering this piece of information, Sisco hurried away, pausing

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in the doorway, however, long enough to say: "Remember, Mistah Lee, to tie him roun' your neck, an' tie him good an' hard."

At length the artist rose, and locking his desk dropped the key into his pocket. Glancing at the clock, he saw that an hour remained which he would be obliged to spend somewhere, and, after pondering a few moments, he decided to drop in at the club and drive from there directly to the station. He was about to ring for a cab, when his attention was attracted by a soft knock at the door. On opening it, Lee was greatly surprised to find a little girl, of about seven or

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eight years, standing in the hallway. It was Margery Trever, Helen's sister, a pretty child with golden brown curls and large dark eyes. Miss Trever, in her visits to the studio, had frequently brought the little girl with her, and Margery and the artist were great friends.

"How do you do, Mr. Artist," Margery exclaimed, holding out a tiny gloved hand. "I've come to pay you a visit."

Having been thrown much with older people, the little girl had formed a quaint habit of speaking and acting in a thoroughly grown-up manner. She always addressed Jim as "Mr. Artist,"

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probably considering it more complimentary than plain "Mr. Lee."

"Won't you come in, Margery?" Lee asked, trying not to show his surprise. "Did — er — did any one come with you?"

Margery, thus invited, entered the studio. She paused in the center of the room and gazed around with undisguised disappointment.

"Why, where are all your pretty things?" she asked. "The pictures, and the tiger rug, and——and Dick's basket!"

"I'm going away, little one," the artist replied, "and they have all been sent to be taken care of until

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I come back again. Your chair has gone, too," he added apologetically.

"Oh, never mind," Margery rejoined politely, as she climbed into Lee's arm-chair. "This one will do just as well, and you can sit over there on the trunk and talk to me. I knew you were going away," she continued, after Lee had seated himself as directed, "so when nurse wasn't looking, I slipped out of the hotel and came here to say good-by to you."

"How did you know I was going away?" he asked in surprise, "and how did you ever find your way here, alone?"

"Auntie told me," Margery replied,

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fondling Dick, who had jumped up to renew his acquaintance, "and I remembered that you lived in West Fifty-seventh Street. A policeman showed me where that was, but I couldn't think of the number; so I walked along looking at the different houses, till I saw Sisco helping a man with some trunks. I asked him where you were, and he told me that I might come up here and see you. Why are you going away, Mr. Artist?"

Lee did not answer immediately. His gaze rested on the little girl; and he was thinking what a pretty picture she made sitting in the great

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arm-chair, her arms around the dog, and the fire-light falling on her curls.

“Why are you going away?” Margery repeated, a little impatiently. “Don’t you like it here any more?”

“Yes, little one,” Jim replied, turning away and resting his gaze on the fire, “I do like it here—very, very much; but some one treated me unjustly, Margery, some one I thought a great deal of; and so I am going away to try and forget all about it.”

The little girl jumped down, and approaching Lee, laid her hand gently on his arm. “I’m so sorry,” she said, drawing a queer little sigh. “I don’t want you to go away at all.

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What a lot of wicked people there must be, Mr. Artist; somebody was very naughty to Helen, too."

Lee started perceptibly, and jumping up made a vigorous assault upon the fire.

"Look out—look out!" Margery cried. "The sparks are flying all over."

"What were you saying about Helen?" Lee asked presently, laying aside the poker and reseating himself on the trunk. "Who has treated her badly?"

"Why, when I went into her room this morning," Margery replied, "she was crying—crying, oh, so hard! And

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when I asked her what the matter was, she said that somebody who had been very naughty to her was going away. I didn't quite understand. I should think if anybody had been naughty to Helen, she'd want them to go away; shouldn't you, Mr. Artist?"

"Go on," cried Lee, jumping up and pacing the floor excitedly. "What else did she say?"

"Oh, look!" exclaimed the little girl, clasping her hands in dismay, "you've torn your coat on that horrid trunk."

"Never mind about the trunk—I mean the coat," Lee exclaimed, sit-

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ting down unceremoniously on the arm of Margery's chair. "Tell me, did Helen say anything more?"

"Let me think—oh, yes! I asked her why—why this somebody had been naughty to her, and she said that some people were heartless, and cruel—and—and took delight in saying one thing when they meant another. People who do that must be very foolish people—don't you think so?"

Lee bent forward and took the little girl's hand in his.

"Margery, is that all Helen said?" he asked softly.

"Yes," Margery replied, wrinkling

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her brow in thought, "except just as I was going, she said something about never seeing Jim again. And—and that her heart was broken; I couldn't quite—why, what's the matter, Mr. Artist?"

Lee had suddenly leaned over and planted a resounding kiss on Margery's cheek. Then springing up he seized his hat and overcoat, and made a rush for the door.

"Sisco, Sisco! where in the devil are you? Never mind about the cab!" he shouted as the old dorky came tumbling up the stairs, "I'm not going away!"

"Oh, goody, goody!" cried Mar-

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gery, forgetting her grown-up manners, and eagerly embracing Dick.

"Here," Lee continued, scribbling like mad on the back of an envelope, "telegraph this to Mr. Winthrop at once. Go down to the station and have my traps sent back. Now, Margery, I'm ready to——"

He paused, a look of complete despair overspreading his face. Turning, he caught the already befuddled Sisco by the arm:

"That note, Sisco—the one I gave you to deliver, a few minutes ago! Have you taken it yet? Why in the devil don't you say something?"

Lee Receives a Visit.

"Golly, Mistah Lee, I's been tryin' to catch ma bref," poor Sisco gasped. "Wha—what note you want? I no nuffin' 'bout no note!"

"The letter I gave you for Miss Trever!" cried the exasperated artist. "What did you do with it?"

"Oh, *dat* letter," replied Sisco, trying to gain time. "I knows all 'bout *dat* letter."

"Well, tell me where it is—instantly!"

"Ya-yes, Mistah Lee, I just wants ter tink, fo' one little moment." A broad grin overspread his wrinkled face. "I have him!" and plunging his hand into a torn coat pocket,

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Sisco drew forth the note with a flourish.

"Here he am, Mistah Lee," the old fellow chuckled. "I done forget him dis time, sure 'nuf."

Lee uttered a sigh of relief, and snatching the note from Sisco he threw it into the fire, watching it burn with keen satisfaction. Then handing something to the mystified negro, he said:

"Here, Sisco, here's five dollars for not delivering that note. Now, Margery, if you're ready, we'll go."

Sisco looked from one to the other in blank amazement; then stepping to the window he carefully examined

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the five-dollar bill. "Dis am bad business," he muttered. "Bad business, sure 'nuf! Mistah Lee must be hoodooed, spite of dat rabbit's foot."

"Mr. Artist," Margery exclaimed, looking at her escort with wondering eyes, "excuse me, but your hat's all smashed in."

"Is it?" Lee exclaimed gayly, removing his hat and then forgetting to fix it. "Come on. There's no time to lose."

He opened the door politely for Margery to pass out.

"But where are we going, Mr. Artist?" she asked, pausing on the threshold.

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Lee's face fairly beamed.

"Back to Helen," he answered.

Clipping from the *Evening Post*.

*Passed Montauk Light at eleven thirty
this morning, steam yacht Shadow, bound
for Southampton.*

Malabar Point.

X.

MALABAR POINT.

Clipping from the Bombay Record.

Arrived on Tuesday, March 5th, at ten a.m., steam yacht Shadow, from Southampton; owner, G. Martin Sethway, of New York.

ONE pleasant morning in the early spring, two men sat smoking on the wide veranda of one of those picturesque little bungalows for which Malabar Point is famous. That they were strangers one could easily see by the

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curious air with which they viewed the surroundings; and their white "ducks" and smart yachting caps indicated that in all probability they were off one of the many pleasure craft at anchor in the harbor.

"Jove! Beverly," the shorter of the two exclaimed, gazing with admiration at the panorama spread out before them, "just look!"

All appeared lovely in the bright sunshine: the terraced point dotted with handsome villas and trees of luxuriant foliage; the beautiful "turquoise" bay, scintillating beneath the sun's rays like a mass of diamonds; stately full rigged ships and dainty

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yachts flecking its surface—some riding at anchor, some creeping along as though affected by the soporific air; the sky, blue as the water; the air, soft and fragrant; and, imbuing everything, a delightful suggestion of peace and tranquillity.

“Yes,” Beverly Winthrop replied, glancing around indifferently, “this is a pretty place, but it’s so devilish warm; and then the mosquitoes”—he grumbled, slapping his cheek vigorously—“I wish I could do something worse to them than merely kill them! Whew! I’m dry as dust. Ring for the boy, that’s a good chap. I’m too lazy to move.”

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His friend Sethway laughed as he leaned over to touch the bell.

“Beverly, I believe you’re the most discontented fellow in the world. We’ve only been here a little over a week, and I can see that you’re desperately tired of it already.”

Winthrop’s only response was to turn with a sigh of satisfaction to the negro servant who just then appeared in the doorway. “Whisky and soda,” he exclaimed. “Don’t be gone more than an hour, and bring plenty of ice.”

Exit servant displaying two rows of ivories which would have set a European dentist wild with delight.

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"Where do we go from here?" Winthrop presently inquired, looking at Sethway with a yawn.

"Up the coast a ways," his friend replied. "Then we'll leave the yacht and make a strike for the hills. There ought to be good hunting hereabouts."

"Do you know, Seth," Winthrop remarked after a space of silence, "I've been thinking a great deal about dear old New York this afternoon."

"Getting homesick already?" the other asked with a smile. "Don't! it's a bad habit."

"There's the annual golf match at Lakewood," Beverly went on. "If I

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were at home, now, I'd stand a fighting chance to at least be in the finals."

"Golf be hanged!" was Sethway's somewhat emphatic response. "If you must have exercise, join the officers in polo over at the fort."

Winthrop straightened up with an exclamation of disgust. "In this heat! You must think me crazy."

"Pshaw! you'd soon get used to it. Those English Johnnies play all the time."

"Well, I prefer to remain under a *punkah*, thank you," Winthrop growled.

Silence reigned for awhile, Winthrop plunged in thought; Sethway

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idly watching a group of natives, who were chattering and gesticulating at a great rate in the road below. At length he turned to Beverly with an annoyed expression.

“What’s the matter to-day, old man? You’re glum as an owl. Was the ball at Government House last night too much for you?”

Winthrop started, as if waking from a sleep. “Excuse me, Sethway,” he replied with a laugh, “my thoughts were in America.”

Sethway gave a troublesome mosquito an extra vicious slap.

“Winthrop, I believe you’re in love. Who is she?”

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“Nonsense! I have trouble enough without falling in love. I was thinking of Jim Lee.”

“Well, what about him?” Sethway asked.

“Why in the devil did he back out at the last minute?”

“You’ve asked me that conundrum before. I’m not a mind-reader.”

“It isn’t a bit like Jim to do a thing of that sort,” Beverly went on.

“He hasn’t written me a line, either.”

“His letter is probably lying at Southampton; those hotel clerks are always confoundedly careless.”

Beverly settled back in his chair, assuming a thoughtful expression.

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"It's odd," he remarked, "how men will ruin their careers for the sake of a woman."

Sethway's reply was a nod that meant volumes.

"Now, there's Lee," Beverly continued, "one of the best fellows in the world. Clever among the cleverest; promising future, and all that sort of thing."

"Well?" queried Sethway.

"He met Helen Trever, and—oh, you know the rest."

Sethway was fanning himself vigorously with his cap, and he looked anything but pleased at Winthrop's assurance.

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"I knew Miss Trever once," he replied without looking up, "and——"

"It didn't matter in *your* case," Beverly coolly interrupted.

"Heh!" exclaimed Sethway, visibly annoyed. "What do you mean by *my* case?"

"Simply that it was a fair game of—h'm—suppose we call it progressive hearts. When she tired of you and took up with another man, you—quite philosophically, and in accordance with the rules of the game—moved on to the next table—I mean the other girl—Adelle Langley, wasn't it?"

"Well," replied Sethway, now thor-

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oughly roused, "let Jim do as I did."

"Ah," Beverly replied; "unfortunately it's different in his case. Jim didn't understand the rules of the game. In fact, he didn't realize it was a game at all—until too late. He happened to have a heart, and she broke it."

"Stuff! Some other girl has mended it by this time; that's probably the reason he didn't come with us."

Beverly paused long enough to light a fresh cigarette, and then said quietly: "Jim isn't that sort of a fellow. I know him better than you do."

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"I suppose you think that he is still sighing for her?"

"Probably."

"And that his career is shattered?"

"I shouldn't wonder."

"I'll bet you anything you like, that he's forgotten all about her by this time."

"I'll take you up willingly," Beverly replied, "but we can't prove anything in this God-forsaken hole."

"Well, what do you think will become of him?"

"Jim? Oh, he'll settle down in some country town, where he can mope undisturbed, or else he may take up religion, and——"

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"And preach sermons on the insincerity of women?" laughed Sethway; "that would be more appropriate. But I don't agree with you at all. Lee is too sensible a chap to turn his back on the world just because a girl has thrown him over."

"I thought so before I left home," assented Beverly, "but I've changed my mind since. However, let's hear your theory."

"My theory is very simple," Sethway said. "Jim will mope for a couple of weeks, and then suddenly realize that he's making an ass of himself—that she isn't worth it."

"And then?"

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“Oh,” replied Sethway dryly, “he’s sure to find some other girl, just as sweet, and charming and all that; and who can tell, he may be luckier the next time.”

Beverly smiled.

“I hope you’re right;” he said, “for Jim’s sake, at least. And Helen Trever, what do you suppose has become of her?”

“Still adding hearts to her collection, I presume. It must be pretty large by this time.”

“Oh, she’ll marry some day,” Beverly remarked sagely.

“A title perhaps.”

“Not unless he’s backed up by

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plenty of money—dear Miss Brand will see to that.”

“Naturally,” agreed Sethway, “the old lady will strike as sharp a bargain as possible.”

Just then the servant appeared in the doorway, carrying a well-laden tray. Placing it on a small wicker table, he pocketed the generous tip Beverly threw him and vanished without sound or word.

“I think I’ll have to take some of those chaps home with me,” Beverly remarked, casting a glance after the boy. “They could give our servants points. Draw up and help yourself, old man. Hello! here’s

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some letters," he exclaimed, spying something white on the tray.

"Letters! Oh, local mail, I suppose."

"Not a bit of it," cried Beverly.
"American stamps."

"Well! I didn't expect the mail for a couple of days at least. A tailor's bill, probably—those chaps always find you out."

"Mine's a wedding invitation," Beverly exclaimed, opening the second envelope.

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*Miss Elizabeth Brand
requests the pleasure of your
presence
at the marriage of her niece
Helen Dwight Trever
to
Mr. James Lee
on Wednesday evening,
March the thirteenth,
at nine o'clock,
at the
Church of the Ascension,
Fifth Avenue and Tenth Street.*

Without a word, Beverly laid it on
the table.

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"Yes," exclaimed Sethway huskily, "mine's the same."

"Fooled again," Winthrop murmured.

"Both wrong," muttered Sethway.

They sat in silence, each busy with his own thoughts. In the park some distance away the military band was playing, and Winthrop could not help smiling as he caught the strains of "Yankee Doodle."

Sethway suddenly brought his hand down on the table with a bang. "By jove!" he exclaimed, "to-day is the thirteenth."

"Yes," Beverly replied, glancing at his watch and then making a few rapid calculations in his memorandum

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book, "they must be going up the aisle now!"

Sethway rose, upsetting a bottle of soda in his excitement. "I say, Beverly, it's too bad you're not there to be best man. I suppose that——"

"You'd be one of the ushers, of course," Beverly broke in, throwing his cap in the air with the enthusiasm of a schoolboy. "I can see them all, now! Houton, and little Jack Williby, and Cupid and, and——"

"Hold on," cried Sethway, gripping Beverly's arm. "You're mentioning all her former admirers."

"Well, it's only fair to give them a last chance," laughed Beverly. "I

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wager that every one of them will be there."

"Yes, perhaps," agreed Sethway, rather dolefully.

"Oh, excuse me," said Beverly smiling. "I forgot for the moment, Sethway, that you would be absent. But, cheer up, it's not your fault."

"If all Miss Trever's bygones attend, there won't be room for any one else," remarked Sethway, paying no attention to his chum's insinuation. "It's the spread I'm sorry to miss."

"Never mind," said Beverly philosophically, pouring out some whisky and adding what remained of the soda.

Malabar Point.

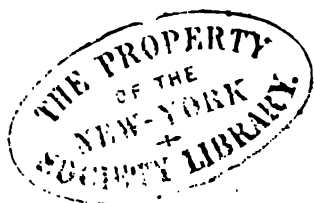
"We can't be present, Sethway, but we'll drink their health just the same."

Both fellows solemnly raised their glasses.

"Here's to Jim Lee," Beverly Winthrop exclaimed, "one of the best fellows in the world."

"And to Miss Helen Trever," added Sethway, "one of the most charming girls."

"Yes," agreed Beverly, draining his glass, "and a clever one, too."



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HS

1. The first part of the document is a list of names and addresses of the members of the committee.

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